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EXAMINER

CHUONG, TRUC T

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2174

DATE MAILED: 10/07/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/804,309

Applicant(s)

MCCLELLAN, JAMES R.

Examiner

Truc T Chuong

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) ____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

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DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1. Claim 25 is objected to because of the following informalities: an extra “,” in line 2.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bradley et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,584,507 B1).

As to claim 1, Bradley teaches method for generating a tree-style graphical representation that depicts simultaneously hierarchical and non-hierarchical interrelationships among a set of entities and that is displayed as a graphical user interface on a screen of a visual display unit, said method comprising:

acquiring a first specification that describes a set of hierarchical interrelationships among said set of entities (col. 3 lines 4-14, col. 9 line 51-col. 10 line 55, elements 205, 216a-216e of fig. 2A);

acquiring a second specification that describes a set of non-hierarchical interrelationships among said set of entities (elements 208 and 203 of figs. 2A-B);

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constructing said tree-style graphical representation depicting both said set of hierarchical interrelationships and said set of non-hierarchical interrelationships among said set of entities (figs. 2A-B, and 5A-B); and

displaying said tree-style graphical representation to produce said graphical user interface on said screen of said visual display unit (figs. 2A-B, and 5A-B).

As to claim 2, Bradley teaches the method according to claim 1, wherein said acquiring a first specification includes at least one of:

extracting said first specification from a digital file stored on a computer readable medium (col. 6 lines 41-67, and figs. 2A-B); and

obtaining said first specification from an interactive graphical user interface (figs. 2A-B).

As to claim 3, it is individually similar in scope to claim 2 above; therefore, rejected under similar rationale.

As to claim 4, Bradley teaches the method according to claim 1, wherein said constructing further comprises:

forming an initial tree-style graphical representation that depicts said set of hierarchical interrelationships among said set of entities (figs. 2A-B); and

incorporating said set of non-hierarchical interrelationships into said initial tree-style graphical representation, by depicting said set of non-hierarchical interrelationships without altering said set of hierarchical interrelationships depicted in said initial tree-style graphical representation, to produce said tree-style graphical representation (figs. 2A-B, and figs. 5A-B).

As to claim 5, Bradley teaches the method according to claim 4, wherein said forming includes graphically depicting a hierarchical interrelationship in such a manner that the child

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entity in said hierarchical interrelationship appears left-indented from where the parent entity in said hierarchical interrelationship appears (figs. 2A-B, and figs. 5A-B).

As to claim 7, Bradley teaches a method for modifying a tree-style graphical representation that depicts simultaneously hierarchical and non-hierarchical interrelationships among a set of entities and that is displayed as a modified graphical user interface on a screen of a visual display unit, said method comprises at least one of:

adding a new entity to the depiction of said tree-style graphical representation (Create Option, col. 10 lines 1-9, figs. 3A-E); and

deleting a depicted entity from the depiction of said tree-style graphical representation (Delete Option, col. 10 lines 1-9).

As to claim 8, Bradley teaches the method according to claim 7, wherein said adding further comprises:

defining said new entity (col. 10 lines 25-40);

specifying a position in said tree-style graphical representation where said new entity can be inserted (folder and subfolder, col. 10 lines 1-23);

modifying said tree-style graphical representation to incorporate said new entity at said position (col. 18 lines 47-67); and

displaying said tree-style graphical representation, modified by said modifying to produce said modified graphical user interface on said screen of said display unit (col. 10 lines 1-16, and figs. 3A-E).

As to claim 9, Bradley teaches the method according to claim 7, wherein said deleting further comprises:

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selecting said depicted entity from said tree-style graphical representation (figs. 2A-B, and figs. 5A-B);

identifying any hierarchical interrelationship and any non-hierarchical interrelationship, associated with said depicted entity (elements 208 and 203 of figs. 2A-B, and figs. 5A-B);

modifying said tree-style graphical representation to incorporate the deletion of said depicted entity and the removal of said any hierarchical interrelationship and any non-hierarchical interrelationship, identified by said identifying (Updater, col. 21 lines 16-64, Delete Option, col. 22 lines 61-67); and

displaying said tree-style graphical representation, modified by said modifying to produce said modified graphical user interface on said screen of said display unit (col. 10 lines 1-16, col. 21 lines 16-64, and figs. 2A-B).

As to claim 10, Bradley teaches a method for modifying a tree-style graphical representation that depicts simultaneously hierarchical and non-hierarchical interrelationships among a set of entities and that is displayed as a graphical user interface on a screen of a visual display unit, said method comprises at least one of:

adding a new hierarchical interrelationship to the depiction of said tree-style graphical representation (Create Option, col. 10 lines 1-9, figs. 3A-E);

deleting a depicted hierarchical interrelationship from the depiction of said tree-style graphical representation (Delete Option, col. 10 lines 1-9);

updating a depicted hierarchical interrelationship in the depiction of said tree-style graphical representation (Updater, col. 21 lines 16-64, Delete Option, col. 22 lines 61-67, and figs. 2A-B).

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As to claim 11, it can be rejected under similar rationale to claim 8. Note the rejection of claim 8 above.

As to claims 12 and 13, they can be rejected under similar rationale to claim 9. Note the rejection of claim 9 above.

As to claim 14, Bradley teaches a method for modifying a tree-style graphical representation that depicts simultaneously hierarchical and non-hierarchical interrelationships among a set of entities and that is displayed as a modified graphical user interface on a screen of a visual display unit, said method comprises at least one of:

adding a new non-hierarchical interrelationship to the depiction of said tree style graphical representation (Updater, col. 21 lines 16-64);

deleting a depicted non-hierarchical interrelationship from the depiction of said tree-style graphical representation (Delete Option, col. 22 lines 61-67);

updating a depicted non-hierarchical interrelationship in the depiction of said tree-style graphical representation (col. 10 lines 1-16, col. 21 lines 16-64, and figs. 2A-B).

As to claims 15 and 16, they can be rejected under similar rationale to claim 9. Note the rejection of claim 9 above.

As to claim 17, Bradley teaches the method according to claim 14, wherein said updating further comprises:

selecting said depicted non-hierarchical interrelationship from said tree style graphical representation (figs. 2A-B, and figs. 5A-B);

revising the specification associated with said depicted non-hierarchical interrelationship to produce a modified non-hierarchical interrelationship (Edit of figs. 2A-B);

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modifying said tree-style graphical representation to replace said depicted non-hierarchical interrelationship by said modified. non-hierarchical interrelationship (Updater, col. 21 lines 16-64, Delete Option, col. 22 lines 61-67); and

displaying said tree-style graphical representation, modified by said modifying to produce said modified graphical user interface on said screen of said display unit (col. 10 lines 1-16, col. 21 lines 16-64, and figs. 2A-B).

As to claim 18, Bradley teaches obtaining as claim 2, wherein said obtaining further comprises:

displaying various entities from said set of entities in said graphical user interface;
selecting a parent entity from said various entities within said interactive graphical interface;

selecting a child entity from said various entities within said interactive graphical interface; and

defining a hierarchical interrelationship between said parent entity and said child entity (figs. 2A-B, and figs. 5A-B).

As to claim 19, it can be rejected under similar rationale to claim 1. Note the rejection of claim 1 above.

As to claims 20-23, they are computer program product claims of the method claims 1, 7, 10, and 14. Note the rejections of claim 1, 7, 10, and 14 above respectively.

As to claims 24-26, they are system claims of the method claims 1, 2, and 13. Note the rejections of claims 1, 2, and 13 above respectively.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bradley et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,584,507 B1) in view of Dong et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,380,937 B1).

As to claim 6, Bradley teaches the method according to claim 4, wherein said incorporating by depicting includes graphically displaying a connection between any two entities involved in any one of said set of non-hierarchical interrelationships (Note the rejection of claim 1 above and figs. 2A-B, and 5A-B); however, Bradley does not show any one set of non-hierarchical interrelationships on the right side of where said two entities appear in said initial tree-style graphical representation. Dong clearly teaches this feature (hierarchical tree connectors 54 of figs. 3-5, and col. 4 line 59-col. 5 line 40). It would have been obvious at the time of the invention that a person with ordinary skill in the art would want to have the hierarchical tree connectors of Dong in to Bradley's environment to reflect changes in relationships between groups (entities) or subgroups (col. 6 lines 1-5).

Conclusion

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

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Bala (U.S. Patent No. 5,731,814) teaches hierarchical displays, GUI, navigations, and non-hierarchical displays (cols. 1-11 and figs. 1A-6).

Jones et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,644,334) teach hierarchical/non-hierarchical icons, indicators, and GUI (cols. 3-12 and figs. 6A-8).

Weidenfeller et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,028,602) teach hierarchical relationships, dataflow, display, icons, and graphical representation (cols. 3-9 and figs. 4-11).

Lowry (U.S. Patent No. 5,953,724) teaches hierarchical/non-hierarchical relationships, GUI, displays, and indicators (cols. 1-17 and figs. 2A-7A).

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Truc T Chuong whose telephone number is 703-305-5753. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kristine L. Kincaid can be reached on 703-308-0640. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-3900.

Truc T. Chuong

09/29/03

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